

REMARKS

Claims 9-13 and 15-26 are all the claims currently pending in this Application.

Request for Acknowledgement of Priority and Receipt of Priority Documents

Applicants claimed priority from JP 2003-106562 and JP 2004-071234 with the original filing of April 9, 2004. Certified copies of the priority documents were submitted on May 28, 2004. In the Office Actions of May 24, 2006, September 21, 2006, and April 23, 2007, the Examiner has repeatedly failed to acknowledge Applicants claim to foreign priority or the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents.

Applicants again respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge Applicants claim to foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents in the next Office communication.

35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 9-13, and 15-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as allegedly indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the recitations of turning the holding means by a predetermined angle when attaching and detaching the substrate are unclear.

With this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 9, 17, 22, 23, 24, and 26 for purposes of clarity.

Applicants respectfully request that in view of the claim amendments the §112, second paragraph rejection of claims 9-13 and 15-26 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 9-13, 15-17, and 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura (U.S. 2003/0064159) in view of Motoda (U.S. 6,010,570), Mendiola (U.S. 6,254,682) and Inoue (JP 09/241843). Alternately, claims 9-13, 15-17, and 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura in view of Motoda, Mendiola, Inoue, and Takashi (JP 2002-289673).

Claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura in view of Motoda, Mendiola, Inoue, and Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). Alternately claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura in view of Motoda, Mendiola, Inoue, AAPA, and Takashi.

Claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura in view of Motoda, Mendiola, Inoue, and Ichinose (U.S. 4,960,485). Alternately, claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Motomura in view of Motoda, Mendiola, Inoue, Ichinose, and Takashi.

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

None of the cited references, either alone or in combination teach or suggest coating a coating film on a substrate when the substrate is in a horizontal position such that the coated side of the substrate faces downward¹. The coating is performed while maintaining the coated

¹ “maintaining the surface to be coated facing downward; ... and forming the coating film on the surface to be coated of the substrate by moving at least one of the nozzle and the chucking means in a horizontal direction” (independent claim 9); “holding the substrate by a holding means so that the surface to be coated by the coating liquid faces downward” (independent claim 17); “holding means for holding the substrate so that the surface to be coated by the coating liquid faces downward” (independent claim 24).

surfaces facing downward, and therefore, it is not required to introduce a rotating mechanism into the chucking means, and therefore variations in coating can be eliminated.

The references additionally fail to teach or suggestion, either alone or in combination, that upon attaching and detaching the substrate, turning the substrate by a predetermined angle so that the substrate is attached and detached at an inclined angle, but is coated in a horizontal position². The holding of the substrate in a horizontal position during coating is performed by a different mechanism (the chucking means) than the mechanism which turns the substrate by the predetermined angle (the holding means). Turning the substrate may cause subtle positional deviation or vibration. The separation of these two mechanisms enables the position of the substrate during coating to not be influenced by this deviation or vibration.

Further, none of the references, either alone or in combination teach or suggest that when the substrate is attached to the holding means, the holding means is in an inclined position and then turns by a predetermined angle to position the substrate in a horizontal position and that

² "wherein, when the substrate is attached to the holding means, the holding means is in an inclined state and turns by a predetermined angle to make the substrate held in a horizontal state, and when the substrate is to be detached from the holding means, the holding means is in a horizontal state and turns by the predetermined angle to make the substrate held in an inclined state" (independent claim 9); "wherein, when the substrate is attached to the holding means, the holding means is in an inclined state and turns by a predetermined angle to make the substrate held in a horizontal state, and when the substrate is to be detached from the holding means, the holding means is in a horizontal state and turns by the predetermined angle to make the substrate held in an inclined state" (independent claim 17); "said holding means being provided with a turning means for turning the substrate, which is in an inclined state, by a predetermined angle to a horizontal state when the substrate is attached to the holding means, and for turning the substrate which is in a horizontal state by the predetermined angle to an inclined state when the substrate is to be detached from the holding means" (independent claim 24)

when the substrate is detached from the holding means, the holding means is in a horizontal position and turns by a predetermined angle to position the substrate in an inclined position³.

For example, in Takashi, a holding part 111 is turned to be inclined and to be made parallel with a substrate when the substrate is already in an inclined position. There is no teaching or suggestion of a holding means, as recited in the claims of the present invention, which, when the substrate is attached to the holding means, turns by a predetermined angle to put the substrate into a horizontal state from an inclined state or into an inclined state from a horizontal state.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 17, and 24 are patentable over any combination of the cited references and that claims 10-13, 15, 16, 18-23, 25, and 26 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence. Applicants respectfully request that the §103(a) rejections of the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

³ Id.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Moskowitz
Registration No. 55,470

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON DC SUGHRUE/265550

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Date: October 22, 2007